



WIN AT WORK. WIN AT LIFE.

Workforce Development Center Youth Summer Program White Paper

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Bring Your A Game to Work
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**Arapahoe Douglas Works
National Workforce Program**

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Bring Your A Game to Work is not your average youth workplace training program where an adult tells young people what to do with a finger in their face the whole time. This is also not your average white paper where we spend 30 pages sharing dry, scientific research. It's not your average white paper, just what you need to know about how Bring Your A Game to Work, works in a workforce development center environment.

Just as the fundamental workplace values instilled and reinforced through The A Game can't be mistaken for soft skills, don't mistake this research as qualitative or squishy. To the contrary, it took months of work to compile the data through tested (see "boring" in the dictionary), academic methodology. We're all about sharing the hard facts in a relevant, meaningful way.

This white paper focuses on an A Game project that was completed in the summer of 2009 with Arapahoe Douglas Works, a nationally recognized workforce development center in Colorado.

Program Overview:

The *Bring Your A Game to Work* summer youth training program was proposed to build a foundation for work ethic training at Arapahoe/Douglas Works (AD Works) by developing a training and certification model that can be continually replicated by the Youth Works staff. AD Works and The A Game worked together to develop a unique pilot program of curriculum appropriate to the audience and co-branded the workshop presentations.

The summer instruction consisted of a Train the Trainer session for the Youth Works team, eight youth training sessions presented in two half-day formats by The A Game staff, an employer training session and, lastly, online mastery level certification in the seven fundamental workplace values for all youth participants.

The AD Works program was intended to meet the job readiness training needs under the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), as well as become a national pilot for work ethic training.

Overall Program Highlights...The Important Stats:

Over **95% of the youth** involved in the training and certification gave the program the **highest scores** in terms of the training being fun, relevant and something they can put to use in the workplace.

For the summer program as a whole, 300 youth participated, of which 150 completed the A Game training and certification. 44% of the youth that did not complete the A Game program received satisfactory ratings for on the job performance from employers. Of the 150 youth that were A Game certified, **90% received satisfactory ratings from their employers.**

AD Works has instituted Bring Your A Game to Work training and certification as the **main component** of youth work readiness training at the center.

The Colorado Governor's Jobs Cabinet recognized the AD Works pilot program as **one of five most promising practices** in youth workforce development in the state at the conclusion of the pilot program.



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Program Goals:

The following are the goals outlined at the onset of the AD Works summer youth training program:

1. *Train the Youth Works staff to deliver work ethic training and certification using The A Game curriculum.*
2. *Conduct training workshops on work ethic and job readiness for 150 youth enrolled in the ARRA summer program.*
3. *Deliver a half-day training program for employers hiring youth involved in the AD Works program.*
4. *Certify 150 youth for work via the patented A Game Online Mastery Certification.*
5. *Provide continual support to the Youth Works team in conducting The A Game workshops and certification with youth enrolled in Workforce Investment Act (WIA) programming.*

Success Measures:

Overall, The A Game work ethic training pilot program is considered to be successful at AD Works. The youth that completed the training workshops rated the experience as valuable to their future jobs, and both the youth and employer participants believed it was worth the time they invested. The training and certification has been adopted by the Youth Works staff and is now being utilized for all program participants at AD Works.

Goal 1: Train the Youth Works staff to deliver work ethic training and certification using The A Game curriculum.

In June of 2009, a half-day Train the Trainer session was conducted by The A Game staff with the six permanent Youth Works staff members. Each staff member also participated as an observer and co-facilitator in the youth workshops lead by The A Game staff over the summer.

Goal 2: Conduct training workshops on work ethic and job readiness for 150 youth enrolled in the summer program.

The A Game conducted a series of eight half-day sessions starting in June, 2009 and ending in September, 2009. These sessions were offered as a value added incentive to youth participating in the summer program. These sessions were conducted by both A Game staff and AD Works youth staff.

Youth Session Participant Feedback:

Measurement	All of the Time	Part of the Time	Somewhat	Not at All
1. I felt the presenter did a good job sharing information and kept me engaged	90%	10%		
2. I found the information presented useful to my future jobs	90%	9%	1%	
3. I enjoyed the activities and found them relevant to my job	85%	10%	5%	
4. I found the outside assignments fun and relevant to my future job	60%	35%	5%	
5. What the training a good use of your time	90%	10%		
6. Would you tell other people to go through the training	80%	15%	5%	

Goal 3: Deliver a half-day training program for employers hiring youth in the Youth Works program.

In August of 2009, The A Game facilitated a half-day workshop for employers of youth participants on how to continue to reinforce the seven fundamental values of work ethic in youth on the job. The A Game also provided a series of short videos produced exclusively for AD Works that can be sent to employers or utilized internally by AD Works to continue to reinforce the seven fundamental values on the job.



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Goal 4: Certify 150 youth via the patented A Game Online Mastery Certification.

The Online Mastery A Game Certification was opened to The A Game workshop participants in August of 2009. To date, 128 youth have completed the full A Game certification. On average, it has taken youth 1.5 hours to complete the certification with some taking as little time as ½ an hour and some up to 3 hours.

Goal 5: Provide continual support to the Youth Works team in conducting The A Game workshops and certification with youth enrolled in AD Works programming.

The A Game has provided the Youth Works team with full training materials in electronic format on jump drives and created a customized web portal for The A Game certification and training. This web portal is continually updated to ensure the content is always up-to-the-minute. The A Game staff conducts a regular check in (monthly) with the staff and is available via phone or e-mail for support.

What Participants Said About The Program:

The following comments were taken directly from the surveys distributed to youth after the training program.

"I knew the information already, but didn't know how to DO it."

"The workshop got me out of my comfort zone."

"The training makes everything (about my job) clearer."

"It provided lots of information on how to keep a job."

"I know I will use this training in the future."

"The information will come in handy at work."

Recommendations Based on This Program:

With any pilot program, we know we learn more than we share in terms of training. The AD Works program was no exception to the rule. A few important lessons were learned for future programs.

1. Make sure that the employer training component draws a significant audience through marketing the program as a value added training experience for the employer's staff members as the more the employers know about the program, the easier it is for them to reinforce values on the job.
2. Have youth complete the A Game Certification immediately upon finishing the training workshop programs. This ensures the training is fresh in their minds as they go through the certification and that they can make the time in their schedules to complete the online program.
3. Hand out the book, "Bring Your A Game to Work" as a take away for participants to start their own "success" collection. Sometimes it's the first book they have ever been given and participants have stated that they continue to go back to it.
4. Utilize the A Game curriculum resources such as the Wall Art set in the youth center to reinforce the 7 Fundamental Workplace Values.
5. Integrate the program as the main focus for work readiness training vs. a value added program.



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Bring Your A Game to Work is a national workplace initiative aiming to rebuild work ethic in young people. Youth can earn mastery level certification to prove that they are work ready, and the adults, who teach them, manage them, and care about them can help get them there. Whether you are a manager who needs better employees, a workforce development professional or teacher in need of curriculum, or a parent who wants to prepare your children for their future, The Bring Your A Game to Work Initiative has tools to help you develop work ethic in youth.

Find out more at: www.theAgame.com

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